

Christian David Ginsburg

Christian David Ginsburg (born 25 December 1831, Warsaw, Congress Poland, Russian Empire (now in Poland); died 7 March 1914, Palmers Green, Middlesex, England) was a Polish-born, British Bible scholar and student of the masoretic tradition in Judaism.

Early life

He was born to a Jewish family in Warsaw on 25 December 1831, converting to Christianity at the age of 15.

Work

Coming to England shortly after the completion of his education in the Rabbinic College at Warsaw, Ginsburg continued his study of the Hebrew Scriptures, with special attention to the *Megillot*. The first result of these studies was a translation of the *Song of Songs*, with a historical and critical commentary, published in 1857. A similar translation of *Ecclesiastes*, followed by treatises on the Karaites, the Essenes, and the *Kabbala*, kept the author prominently before biblical students while he was preparing the first sections of his *magnum opus*, the critical study of the *Masorah*.

Magnum opus

Beginning in 1867 with the publication of Jacob ben Hayyim's *Introduction to the Rabbinic Bible, Hebrew and English, with notices*, and the *Masoret haMasoret* of Elias Levita, in Hebrew, with translation and commentary, Ginsburg took rank as an eminent Hebrew scholar. In 1870 he was appointed one of the first members of the committee for the revision of the English version of the Old Testament under contract with the Trinitarian Bible Society. His life-work culminated in the publication of the *Masorah*, in three volumes (1880–1886), followed by the *Massoretico-critical edition of the Hebrew Bible* (1894), and the elaborate introduction ^[1] to it (1897).

Ginsburg had one predecessor in the field, the learned Jacob ben Hayyim, who in 1524-1525 had published the second *Rabbinic Bible*, containing what has ever since been known as the *Masorah*; but neither were the materials available nor was criticism sufficiently advanced for a complete edition. Ginsburg took up the subject almost where it was left off by those early pioneers, and collected portions of the *Masorah* from the countless manuscripts scattered throughout Europe and the East. Ginsburg published *Facsimiles of Manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible* (1897 and 1898), and *The Text of the Hebrew Bible in Abbreviations* (1903), in addition to a critical treatise *On the relationship of the so-called Codex Babylonicus of A.D. 916 to the Eastern Recension of the Hebrew Text* (1899, for private circulation). In the last-mentioned work he seeks to prove that the *St. Petersburg Codex*, for so many years accepted as the genuine text of the Babylonian school, is in reality a Palestinian text carefully altered so as to render it conformable to the Babylonian recension. He subsequently undertook the preparation of a new edition of the Hebrew Bible for the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Other

He also contributed many articles to John Kitto's *Encyclopaedia*, William Smith (lexicographer)'s *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, and the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1877–1887).

References

- This article incorporates text from a publication now in the public domain: Chisholm, Hugh, ed. (1911). *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.). Cambridge University Press.

External links

- *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible* ^[1] (1897)
- Christian David Ginsburg's ^[2] biography on Messianic Judaism Wiki ^[3].

References

[1] <http://www.archive.org/stream/introductionofma00ginsuoft#page/n3/mode/2up>

[2] http://en.messianicjudaismwiki.com/wiki/Christian_David_Ginsburg

[3] <http://en.messianicjudaismwiki.com/>

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